

Annual Plan (2015-2016)

DRAFT, June 18, 2014

Mission Statement:

To conserve and improve our natural resources, integrating the demand for environmental quality with the needs of agricultural and urban users. The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County seeks to achieve the sustainable management of natural resources including soil, water, vegetation and wildlife throughout Monterey County.

Goals (with 5 Year Objectives in italics)

Annual Tasks towards 5-year objectives

Water Quality

Enhance the quality of water in Monterey County through responsible management practices with voluntary cooperators

Support 10-20 agricultural land managers to plan, design and implement farm irrigation and nutrient management improvement projects in the Salinas and Elkhorn watersheds and track their effectiveness for water quality improvement

- Assist Sustainability Index for Specialty Crops in testing water and nutrient conservation metrics with Salinas Valley and Moro Cojo Slough area cooperating vegetable producers.
- Oversee implementation of two INM improvement projects in partnership with UCCE under Prop 84 grant program.
- Collaborate with local, regional, state and federal partners to trial small watershed approach for managing farm drainage water quality

Support 10-20 hillside farm runoff and erosion management projects in north Monterey County

- Conduct at least 5 site evaluations and recommendations for erosion control on Monterey Co (with emphasis on Santa Rita Creek watershed) farm and ranchlands.

Provide technical runoff water quality management assistance to urban municipalities and/or residents in three different communities

- Build relationship with Cities of Salinas, King City and Soledad for partnership regarding Salinas River and tributaries management as related to their lands.

Assist or support implementation of two regional treatment wetland projects in the lower Salinas watershed.

- Coordinate with local agencies, non-profits and growers to design and implement Blanco Drain treatment wetland project
- Provide design and technical support for Central Coast Wetlands Group treatment wetland projects as requested.

Reduction in sediment movement from five miles of rural roads treated with improved drainage techniques

- Track and support implementation of road improvement projects associated with RCD- and county-fostered road assessments (esp. Pico Blanco and BSLT)

Reduce contaminant and sediment movement off of ten confined livestock facilities by 95%

- *Track and document status of installed Livestock and Land project sites from past programs*

Water Quantity

Improve water conservation in collaboration with growers, landowners, and partner organizations and agencies to identify and implement improved management practices

▪ *Provide technical support for irrigation water management improvements for increased*

- Provide at least 5 fee-for-service irrigation evaluations with grower (and irrigation foremen)

efficiency of applied water	<p>follow up regarding potential associated practice changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement irrigator training program in Spanish and English in partnership with industry and Cal Poly ITRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide technical support for the conversion of 10 fields from sprinkler to drip irrigation. Irrigation efficiency assessment programs document an average of 10% water savings on 200 acres or 20 fields. Improved fertilizer management resulting in average 20% reduction in use on 200 acres or 20 fields through nutrient and water budgeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NRCS with EQIP project design and implementation for water management projects on 10 ranches. Verify benefits of changes for implemented practices under Prop 84 INM grant and future-funded projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support implementation of ten rainwater and/or irrigation runoff capture projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct outreach to promote use of catchment projects.
<p>Soil Health/Sustainability</p> <p>Maintain regional agricultural viability by promoting and supporting application and maintenance of proper soil management techniques on farm and ranch lands.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 hillside berry fields treated with winter preparedness practices in cooperation with RCD of Santa Cruz County 50% reduction in erosion potential estimated on lands managed by hillside growers that implement winter preparedness and other runoff management practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct winter preparedness program in Santa Rita Creek and other north county watersheds Support application of winter preparedness techniques (road/furrow straw and seed) on 10 hillside farm sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and participate in development of local trials of soil-building practices on rangelands. Support innovative cover crop applications on irrigated farmlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate availability of services to assist with cover crops and soil-building practices during site visits and field meetings.
<p>Vegetation and Wildlife Management</p> <p>Identify, plan and implement restoration or conservation plans and projects with land managers and communities to protect or restore habitat that benefits natural and agricultural resources</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 3 neighborhood/watershed groups to develop and implement management plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in coordinating or facilitating Carmel River TAC meetings and project implementation subcommittees Complete revision of the Carmel Watershed Action Plan Support coordination with private landowners on Santa Rita Creek. Convene Big Sur Watershed group for supporting voluntary implementation of projects identified in Big Sur River Watershed Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with Monterey County Weed Management Area partners to map, prioritize and treat 100 acres of noxious weeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support WMA partner projects as requested
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arundo population on 100 Salinas River riparian acres reduced by 95% with retreatment plans for 100% control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete retreatment with herbicide on ~120 previously-mowed acres for Salinas River arundo control program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract/oversee work on non-WCB funded acres by volunteer landowners Monitor permit compliance on acres treated under RCD program permits. Provide permit compliance support for Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Prescribed fire applied on 100 acres in rangeland</i> <i>Support implementation 500 acres of forest fuel reduction/thinning/prescribed burn in partnership with landowners and appropriate agencies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular communication with the Monterey County Fire Safe Council If requested, develop and submit 1-2 grant applications for sub-regional Firesafe projects Support NRCS EQIP contracts for prescribed fire as requested, including treatments on Tularcitos Ridge and the Sierra de Salinas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Support 40 acres of grassland restoration/reseeding</i> <i>5000 linear feet of riparian improvement projects</i> <i>Support voluntary implementation of two fish passage or habitat improvement projects</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update restoration project list for Monterey County IWRP Assist Riverside Campground bridge project permitting in preparation for 2016 implementation. Oversee development of 100% designs for North Monterey County High School Nature Area under IWRP. Direct at least one additional restoration project for project design and permitting through IWRP. Support landowners in obtaining Carmel River Settlement Funds for design and implementation of voluntary restoration projects on Carmel River tributaries Support voluntary fish passage improvement efforts on Arroyo Seco River.
Air Quality/Energy Resources Support the agricultural and rural communities' efforts to manage air quality and reduce smoke and wind-borne soil movement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>500 acres of forest fuel reduction/thinning/prescribed burn in partnership (see above)</i> <i>2500 linear feet of hedgerows installed</i> <i>500 acres of cover crop</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include vegetation projects in new proposals Support landowner applications for EQIP Facilitate Monterey County Air Pollution Control District Chipping Voucher program as requested.
Education Educate land managers and the public regarding resource management methods and rationale	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Two workshops for grape growers in partnership with Central Coast Vineyard Team</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct workshop with Central Cast Vineyard Team on roads or other topic as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>100 land managers attend RCD workshops each year</i> <i>20 partners attend workshops each year</i> <i>Bilingual training and materials for all workshops.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new educational materials in Spanish as needed Assist NRCS and ALBA in communications with and trainings for Spanish-speaking growers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>RCD newsletter distributed quarterly via internet or mail</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish digital RCD Newsletter

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly articles in local newspapers and partner organization newsletters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish four articles in various newsletters and papers regarding RCD Conservation projects and efforts Post published articles on RCD website and distribute to Board Give three presentations to community groups regarding the RCD's work Send two RCDMC Newsletter articles out to other publications for extended outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCD website maintained with up-to-date accessible information about RCD practices and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update RCD website monthly. Re-organize RCD website to promote available services Implement RCDMC website overhaul
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Farm Days to reach 1800 kids in five years Run annual speak-off competition and land-judging competitions for high school students depending on levels of school interest Send at least one student to range camp each year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct RCD Speak-Off Competition at October RCD Board meeting. Coordinate with FFA instructors to plan and host a land-judging competition. Solicit and select at least one high school student to participate in Range Camp Host two RCD events to raise funds for and promote RCD work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide water quality management information to livestock managers and pursue funding for larger-scale program such as Livestock and Land 	<p>Identify resources for renewing outreach and technical assistance to livestock management community</p> <p>Cooperate with UCCE Range and Natural Resources Advisor for supporting range management efforts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to food safety/water quality co-management information and education efforts on the Central Coast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information to Farm, Food Safety and Conservation Network steering committee and outreach efforts as requested
<p>District Operations</p> <p>Rebuild a diverse, competent staff and board that is effectively linked with regional partners using effective communication, grants, and other, more stable funding mechanisms</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote/build NRCS-RCD partnership in Monterey County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new operational agreement with NRCS for regarding local partnership. Assist NRCS under on-going cooperative agreement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular partnership with Ag Commissioner and MCWRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain contractual working relationship with County Agriculture Department Develop contract for cooperative work with MCWRA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hydrologist/engineer or agronomist on staff or contract (DONE!) Alternative stable funding for two positions Regular partnership with Ag Commissioner and MCWRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen biologist and/or program management position to lead vegetation management and regional permit assistance programs. Formalize permit streamlining program with County of Monterey and pursue options for a larger-scale permit coordination program Complete business plan for contract work in Monterey County.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the business plan, develop contract relationships with private companies and local organizations for engineering and biological services. Submit at least three new major grant proposals (depending upon solicitation announcements) to sources such as IRWMP/DWR, Coastal Conservancy, Dept of Fish and Game, and the Wildlife Conservation Board.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation of entire county on board (mid-coast and Soledad/Mission areas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue outreach for associate directors for unrepresented skills, regions, and groups in Monterey County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with 3 municipalities for contract work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See similar item under 'Water Quality'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new, self-sustaining income streams for RCD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek mitigation properties to maintain for rental income and practice demonstration Develop relationship with CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife to manage ag leases at Elkhorn Slough.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated project tracking among RCDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit project information to Central Coast Action Tracker

Items in addition to RCDMC Strategic Plan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Build & Maintain Public Awareness of RCDMC</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote 'Cooperator of the Year' at RCD BBQ Develop one additional board member-led community event (volunteer day, feast, land-judging, 'Day in the District' public projects tour) Develop and submit an RCD 'Annual Report' to RCD Board, Monterey County Board of Supervisors, and other interested partner groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Regional partnership, mentoring and capacity-building</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide technical assistance and guidance to partner RCDs and organizations Participate in statewide RCD capacity-building and baseline-fund support development Pursue renewal of annual inter-RCD event with neighboring districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Board development/function</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and implement calendar for Board policy development as guided by CARCD Standards document Executive Director and Board Members complete Ethics Training and Statements of Economic Interest (Form 700) Board members tour a selection of project sites at least once Board reviews Executive Director Performance prior to June 2016 Board and Executive Director develop Annual work plan and budget for 2016-17 Establish annual Board of Directors 'self-assessment'